

The director draws hard on his half-smoked cigarette then rubs his chin, squinting his eyes. Across the room two actors are rehearsing a scene and something is not as it should be. But he allows them to continue for a moment while he paces to stage right and leans against a table. He takes another puff and scrutinizes

the action. Those actors not in the scene wait quietly. Some study their lines while others watch intently. They glance up briefly when Joe Sansonese, the director and playwright, stands at front center and stops the action. Maybe the scene lacks intensity or maybe it's too intense. It's a fine line, but Sansonese is concerned with subtleties.

"When you put something on paper it talks back to you," Sansonese said later. "If it doesn't give you the feeling that you want, you go back and change it." In the process of writing a script, Sansonese says he continues to make revisions until he gets the feeling he wants. Then he must see it performed. "What I do is look at the actors and see if that feeling is

coming from them," he says. "It's not the same thing to have words do it as a person. Generally, an actor does all kinds of things that you never expected. That's the exciting thing about directing." Although Sansonese is a great believer in flexibility, several of the actors in the play say he has a definite idea of what he wants. But the director doesn't force his point in rehearsal. He compliments the actors and suggests subtle changes.

"The House on the Point" is one of two plays written by Sansonese that he and his wife, Judith Kovach, a graduate dance student at the University, are producing for their Full Moon Festival of the Arts, this weekend at the old Condon School. The festival will feature two of Sansonese's plays as well as a mixed media show.

The festival is a work of love for Sansonese and Kovach. Their driving purpose is to present a variety of art and local talent to the public.

During the day, Sansonese works as a technical editor for Liquid Chromatography, a journal for chemists. Although its content is far from heavy drama, it's written in Sansonese's second language. He holds a Master's degree in physics from Brown University. This might seem to be an unusual occupation and education for a literary, but he has a good excuse.

"I knew all my life I had a talent for writing, but I was a product of the Sputnik generation," he says, "...and there was pressure then to go into science." But through high school and college he attended Jesuit schools.

"Against your will they gave you a real broad spectrum of learning," he says of the Jesuits. But he is thankful for what they taught him because he developed a deep appreciation for literature.

Sansonese began writing seriously while sitting in a guard house in Rhode Island. He worked as a night watchman for \$1.85 an hour and out of boredom and a desire, he began writing a novel on a legal pad. The novel was never published, but it spurred him on.

He has since had some short stories published and has worked on several other novels. Playwriting came as an outgrowth of these past literary efforts when he realized he had a talent for writing dramatic scenes.

the playwright as director as physicist

JOE SANSONESE



Joe Sansonese (right) and the cast of "The Mill at Tour d'Ivoire," are part of the Full Moon Festival of the Arts, which takes place this weekend.

Photo by Kirk Hirota

"I noticed that I was writing many many pages in the novels that were just dialogue," he says. "So (playwriting) served two purposes: One, as an outlet for this talent, and two, as an outlet for my work." "The House on the Point" and "The Mill at Tour d'Ivoire," the other play in the festival, are loosely based on Sansonese's personal experiences. For a time he worked as an orderly in a mental hospital, and some of what he saw there appears in "The House." To Sansonese, experiences are the

best foundation for drama. "I believe that everything that happens to you is meaningful," he says. "There is nothing chaotic or accidental in your life. Everything is a lesson in a sense." Although Sansonese considers himself a novelist, he says playwriting allows him to sidestep some of the frustration involved in getting novels published. But he has a second motive that centers on his role as director. "What I enjoy the most since I'm the playwright is not only seeing the words I've written coming

back..." he says, his voice trailing off. "You know, it's like having a child separated from you and then he comes back and you see the resemblance. Sometimes it's a strong resemblance." How closely the play reflects the script depends largely upon the actors' and directors' interpretations of it. In the case of the plays being produced for this festival there is a direct connection between the actors and the author. Chris Pinto is a professional ac-

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It's a celebration of art

The Third Annual Full Moon Festival of the Arts will take place this weekend at the Center for Advanced Technology in Education in the old Condon School on the corner of East 18th Avenue and Agate Street.

The festival originated and has been held for the last two years in Saint Croix in the United States Virgin Islands under the direction of Joseph Sansonese. When Sansonese and his wife, Judith Kovach, a

University graduate student studying dance, moved to Eugene, they decided to bring the celebration with them.

"We ran into people with a lot of talent (in Eugene)," said Sansonese, a playwright and technical editor at a Springfield publishing house.

The first festival occurred during a full moon, which led to it being scheduled during one the second year. There will be a full moon in the area this Saturday morning, according to Sansonese.

The festival begins Friday with the performance of "The House on the Point," a play written by Sansonese, at 8 p.m. The play is loosely based on Sansonese's own experiences at a mental hospital. A "potpourri of the arts" is scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday. Performances during this three-hour period will include guitar and

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